# Specific aspects of indian foreign policy: stagnation and changes

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article focuses on how India organized its foreign policy from the time of independence until the beginning of the 21st century and on the basis of which strategies it pursued. The paper also examines in detail the internal and external factors that have helped the country to achieve effective, positive results in foreign policy and, conversely, have had a significant negative impact. In addition, the article pays special attention to India's relations with the United States, China and Russia, which are currently striving for global hegemony, and the competition between these countries in India. At the same time, the successes, shortcomings and conflicts in India's relations with its neighbors - Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan - are highlighted, as well as their specific reasons. Chronological approach, comparison and synthesis-analysis methods were used in writing the article. It consists of an abstract, keywords, introduction, main part, conclusion and bibliography.

**Keywords:** bipolarity, economic potential, military power, innovative-intensive model of growth, competitive rivalry.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted that the foreign policy strategy of India went through three main stages in its development: colonial, "the time of Jawaharlal Nehru," "the period of geopolitical pragmatism". Under the rule of the British Empire, India occupied a central position in the southern sphere of its influence, controlling the space from the Persian Gulf in the west to the Strait of Malacca in the east. In the first decades of independence, India, under the leadership of J. Nehru, strove to become the supporting structure of an alternative Eurocentrism and bipolarity of the world order, based on the principles of solidarity of the Third World, "anti-imperialism" and neutrality in the "cold war".

Finally, the conceptualization of the "realistic" paradigm of foreign policy is associated with the name of Indira Gandhi, while its material foundations are economic potential and military power. The "pragmatic" concept was tested in the course of the victorious conflict for India for the liberation of Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) in 1971, and the Peace and Friendship Treaty with the Soviet Union, concluded the same year, became the geopolitical "safety belt".

The foreign policy strategy of India underwent some modification in the late 80s and early 90s. last century, and there were good reasons. The disintegration of the Soviet Union, the collapse of the bipolar world, the growing influence of the forces of political Islam, the accelerated economic development of China - these and other factors have made significant adjustments to the behavior of India in the outside world. The ruling circles of India have concluded: the country's military-political potential directly depends on the development of the economy - its structure, diversification, which are entirely determined by the innovative-intensive model of growth and development.

In fact, the new potential of the country was laid in the concept of economic reform of 1991, which already by the mid-90s brought India to the trajectory of accelerated economic growth. In turn, the results of the reform were reflected in the political thinking of the Indian military elite. In her midst, the motive of India sounded more and more persistently - not as a regional, but as a future global power. Objectively, the country faced the task of a qualitative renewal of the military-technical potential. In addition, time itself was rushing the Indian political and military establishment: the accelerated economic growth of China (to which many Indians after the border "war" of 1962. They continue to be mistrusted)

transformed, in particular, into a rapid increase in military spending and the systematic improvement of military potential. Then, in the mid-90s, the Indian military continued to believe in cooperation with Russia, but the crisis (far from spontaneous) of the domestic defense industry complex (MIC) and the massive curtailment of bilateral foreign economic relations under the influence of "liberal reforms" gave rise to a wide discussion about the feasibility "unilateral" orientation of military-technical cooperation with Russia. The Clinton administration promptly responded to signals from Delhi, and already in India itself (primarily in the "elite" English-language press) there were arguments in favor of the active development of military ties with America. True, after the 1998 nuclear test, "tight" sanctions were imposed on India, but soon the administration of George W. Bush began to reconsider the geopolitically "inconvenient" decision for Washington. The motives for such actions were transparent: India was assigned the role of a "counterweight" to China in the Asia-Pacific region.

However, one should not think that India easily agreed to carry out other people's geopolitical plans. The ruling circles of the country, especially their part oriented towards the West, tried in their own way to diversify the geopolitics and military-political strategy of India, to achieve the maximum return on their relations with the United States, Russia, and China.

On the one hand, the Indian ruling circles continue to actively maintain cooperative ties with Russia in the field of military-technical cooperation, which have already taken the form of transferring "sensitive" technologies to the Indian military-industrial complex and are being carried out on the conditions most favorable to India (America is not ready for such initiatives.) On the other hand, The Indian military establishment complains about the irregularity of supplies, the insecurity of the products obtained with the necessary spare parts, insufficient state control over the quality of exported military equipment. A strong opinion has been formed in Indian military circles about the "lack of investment in research and development (R&D) of the Russian defense industry over the past 16-17 years," which definitely undermines its authority as the creators of effective military equipment, including its futuristic models.

Finally, it is not worth criticizing Russia to see exclusively the actions of competitors in the capacious Indian arms market. Indian politicians and the military are well aware: the idealization of Western suppliers in the military-technical cooperation is counterproductive. Thus, the Indian establishment is aware that in the field of trade and economic relations, including military-technical cooperation, the Americans have not abandoned the practice of setting political conditions. A difficulty of a different nature is invisibly present in relations with France: the latter, pursuing purely economic benefits, can sell similar combat systems to a "potential adversary," say, Pakistan.

It's worth remembering that the new role of India that goes beyond the South Asian region ("supra-regional") is a consequence of the country's accelerated modernization and deep diversification of its economy. Indians are confident about the future, for which there are two main reasons.

Firstly, the increase in the dynamics of economic growth to 8-8.5% year on year, based, in particular, on the active development of the agricultural sector (which is important for maintaining internal political stability in the country). Secondly, society feels: the style of political governance of the country is becoming more rational. The content of this approach to governance is:

- a) focusing government efforts on country development strategies;
- b) a qualitative improvement in the activities of administrative institutions;
- c) the conscious separation of public administration from public policy, which usually interferes with the power to systematically perceive Indian society.

However, the undoubted successes in the foreign policy field have not been able to neutralize the long-term challenges to national security, which the Indian government cannot yet counter. Among these "challenges" it is customary to single out several key ones.

India is already Afghanistan's largest regional donor, sending over \$ 1 billion in aid to this state. Some Indian experts question the effective delivery of such assistance, especially since in light of the complication of the situation around Iran, it becomes difficult to assess the possibility of transport projects carried out by India over the past decade between Iran, India, Afghanistan and Central Asia (in addition, India is constantly under pressure The United States, trying to persuade this country to completely curtail trade and economic relations with Iran.) Moreover, the commissioning with the help of the PRC of the strategically important port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea will dramatically expand the

influence of Pakistan and China in Central Asia. Inside Afghanistan itself, the Indian government found itself in a "delicate" situation: given the critical situation of the Hamid Karzai regime, the question naturally arises: what will happen to India's positions in this country?

- 2. The influence of "political Islam" is growing in the western and eastern perimeter of the borders of India. In Pakistan and the People's Republic of Bangladesh (which is believed to have become the nursery of international terrorism), the forces of political Islam are already operating on an independent basis from the government. The goal of these forces, according to Indian political scientists, is to implement a two-pronged scenario: the marginalization of secular parties and associations and, in the long term, the creation of an "Islamic political front" between the two states in order to neutralize India's growing geopolitical influence in the South Asian region.
- 3. Military experts believe that the land and sea borders of India are poorly protected. The "porosity" of state borders is the reason for the intense "movement" of narcotic drugs, weapons and ammunition, as well as counterfeit banknotes to India and beyond. This kind of activity can well cause a disorganization of society, which will inevitably affect the economy and political institutions. Further, the states bordering India are, as a rule, "problem neighbors": the restless Nepal and Bangladesh, which has become the unwitting "apple of Indian-Chinese contention" Myanmar (Burma). According to military experts, these and other factors can be used by the "enemies of India" to weaken its regional and "continental" positions. Geography itself suggests a similar train of thought: India is located between the "golden crescent" and the "golden triangle" the main producers of narcotic raw materials.

The military is particularly worried about the "permeability" of the borders with Myanmar, one of the countries of the "golden triangle", since the "rebels" in some northeastern states of India (border with Myanmar) receive weapons in exchange for the "transit" of drugs.

- 4. There is no unity among the expert community in India regarding strategy in the South Asian region. While one group of specialists believes that Pakistan and Bangladesh are "strong" in the interests of India, others, especially in the military environment, believe that India should "work" for the collapse of these states, whose ruling circles systematically undermine the unity and territorial integrity of the country. In addition, the internal political processes in Pakistan, primarily the "Islamization" of society from below and the potential creation of a "military-religious coalition," pose a threat to the security of India on a long-term basis. Finally, in India there is no clear idea of future relations with Afghanistan after the quite possible return to power in the Kabul of the Taliban.
- 5. Some experts consider the country's national security a lack of a clear hierarchy of India's foreign policy priorities in a controversial polycentric world. As the leading strategic partners of India, experts single out the USA, Russia, China, Israel, Vietnam, Iran. Experts believe that since the "post-unipolar" configuration of the world itself has not yet taken a clear outline, the development of a new foreign policy strategy for India will take at least 5-7 years. However, the "factor of China" is particularly concerned about the political class of India and its intellectual elite.

The Indian-Chinese conflict, at least in a latent form, is possible as a result of competition for energy resources that are scarce for both countries.

The complex interweaving of numerous factors and lines of force forms the foreign policy strategy of India, which is constantly changing, "saturated" with new global and regional content.

The shift of the centers of economic growth from the North Atlantic space to the Asia-Pacific region (APR) resulted in increased attention to the alignment of geopolitical forces developing in the APR, primarily in the virtual "triangle" of India-China-USA.

How is the American geopolitical strategy implemented in relation to the two largest states in the world? On the one hand, the US-Indian nuclear agreement and the US-Indian "strategic dialogue" are seen by some Western experts as an ideal means of pressure on Beijing, because the latter, according to similar forecasts, dutifully accepts the "new" geopolitical role of India, and - at the same time - the role of America as the supreme arbiter of Sino-Indian relations. On the other hand, Washington graciously allows China to play an important additional role in world affairs, of course, auxiliary to the American.

Developing the foreign policy offensive in the key region of the world, the Asia-Pacific region, the American military-political establishment is clearly inspired by the successful course of military-technical cooperation with India: the signing of an agreement on the supply of Lockheed C130 Hercules military transport aircraft (\$ 1 billion) and a promising agreement on the sale of P8i marine patrol aircraft (\$ 2

billion) to this country, replacing the Russian Tu-142M. The geopolitical goal of the supply of American military equipment is obvious: to strengthen and permanently link the Indian armed forces with the US military-industrial complex.

However, Indian-American relations are developing along a rather complicated trajectory, determined both by the dynamics of the interaction of socio-political forces in the country, and by the difficult relations of India with its "great northern neighbor," China.

In India, criticism of the "nuclear agreement" with the United States continues. It is interesting that it is carried out both on the left (by the Communists and some other parties) and on the right ("Bharatiya Janat Party"). The essence of criticism can be defined in one sentence: "nuclear deal" limits the sovereignty of India. However, there are implicit motives that guide the actions of opponents of the agreement.

Firstly, in the foreseeable future of the parliamentary elections, the main socio-political forces do not want to risk their political influence, since a significant portion of voters continue to distrust the United States and its policies. In addition, recent legislative elections in some key states have confirmed the tendency for the National Congress to decline, creating additional uncertainty about the country's political situation. Secondly, apparently, in certain segments of the political elites, one gets the impression of the limits of America's capabilities not only in the world as a whole, but also in the field of nuclear energy and ensuring the implementation of international cooperation projects in this area.

In the Indian domestic political discourse, there is certainly a "geopolitical figure" of China, and the frequency of mentioning the PRC and its policies has recently increased significantly.

The "border problem" is perhaps the stumbling block in relations between Delhi and Beijing. If the Indians continue to remember the tragic events of 1962, the so-called "border war" of the two states, then the Chinese have their own historical claims to India. Unofficially, Chinese scholars refer, in particular, to the "eternally" dual position of India: on the one hand, Indians see Tibet as part of China; on the other hand, this territory, allegedly from the time of the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1947-1964), Delhi continues to be considered as a "buffer zone" between India and China (by the way, Indian political scientists of a conservative nature consider such reasoning a propaganda technique "imperial" Beijing policy.)

True, in recent years, China has adopted a more balanced, historical view of the relations between the two countries regarding Tibet. So, in 2003, apparently, a publication sanctioned by the authorities was published in Beijing, which, in particular, stated: in 1914, an "illegal" treaty was concluded between British India and China from the point of view of international law, according to which Delhi departed 90 thousand square meters. km "primordial" Chinese territory, gradually annexed by the British from Tibet. Thus, Chinese scholars conclude that the "border friction" between Delhi and Beijing was a direct consequence of British imperial policy in India.

Experts note: the set of alternatives to the negotiation process is very limited for both parties.

So, China, in addition to Tibet, is experiencing problems in Xinjiang. However, India will never under any circumstances try to exploit them, if only because at present there is a "strategic understanding" between the two countries regarding the stabilization of the domestic political situation in Pakistan. In addition, Delhi's restraint in this difficult period for China will be appreciated by Beijing, and - who knows - can shorten the path to a final settlement of bilateral relations.

The foreign policy of India is carried out in several important areas, one of which remains the interaction of three super-large states - India, Russia and China. In particular, we are talking about the "strategic triangle" of Russia-India-China. Very interesting events are constantly taking place in this area of world politics. So, it seems appropriate to assess the ability of Russia and India to return bilateral relations to the previous path of development, to overcome the "roughnesses" that arose. Many experts note that from time to time the friction that arises in relations is somewhat deeper than the discontent of the Indian military establishment with the quality of Russian military equipment.

No less problems remain in Sino-Indian relations. Their "historical background" also affects the current state of bilateral relations. Beijing has not forgotten that India's 1998 nuclear test was a response to a hypothetical "nuclear threat" from China. In addition, significant suspicions remain on both sides about each other's intentions. For India, this is China's close allied relations with Pakistan, the threatening part of which is the modernization of the strategic port of Gwadar, which, along with Myanmar and

Bangladeshi Chittagong, is a potential means of effective control over the delivery of energy from the Persian Gulf. For China, India is turning into part of the American strategic plan to "encircle" the PRC. Moreover, the decision of the US Congress (December 2006), interpreted in Beijing as the withdrawal of India from the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is seen as America's desire to turn India into a strategic "counterbalance" to China in the Asia-Pacific region.

In turn, China, through the mouth of President Hu Jintao, in November 2006 proposed India closer bilateral cooperation in nuclear energy. Political scientists note the pragmatic approach of both Delhi and Beijing to the development of bilateral relations, a powerful help of which is the avalanche-like growth in the volume of foreign economic relations between the two countries: if in the early 1990s it amounted to only \$ 100 million, now it is close to 60 billion dollars (together with Hong Kong). With an annual growth of mutual trade turnover of 30%, China has already become India's largest foreign trade partner, thereby displacing the United States from first place.

Some experts in the rapid growth of foreign economic relations between the two most populated countries of the world see Beijing's conscious policy pursuing, in particular, the goal of more tightly linking the underdeveloped and geographically isolated states of the north-east of the country to the markets of Tibet and other southern regions of China. Further, Beijing is seeking to improve the conditions for its investments in Indian infrastructure; more than 25 thousand Chinese have already been trained in Indian information technology firms.

Next in line are joint ventures combining Chinese manufacturing capabilities and Indian IT experience.

Nevertheless, the image of China in the minds of the Indians still retains the features of contradictions. On the one hand, long-term economic growth and its political implications are prompting Indians to look more calmly than in the past on China's actions in Asia. On the other hand, many people in India are wondering: how will China manage its economic potential and how will these actions affect the interests of India? The West seems to hope that the two energy-deficient economies will join in the aggressive struggle for resources and thereby facilitate the "North Atlantic civilization" task of maintaining their geopolitical dominance in the world and, ultimately, survival. However, as some Western political scientists have noted, both Beijing and Delhi clearly prefer "soft power" factors to solve their domestic and foreign policy problems.

The historical dynamics of Sino-Indian relations clearly indicates to Russia the paradigm of its future activities. Firstly, a forced economic recovery will allow the country to actively use the "soft power" factors in foreign policy and thereby once and for all get rid of the "inferiority complex" in relation to the West. Secondly, industrial-based economic growth will make interaction within the "triangle" natural, and it will make it easier for the country to achieve the strategic objective of boosting the development of Siberia and the Far East. Thirdly, the horizontal interaction of the three countries can serve as a prototype of the new structure of the world system on the basis of "unity in diversity." In this, and only in this capacity, a revival of the "triangle" and its strategic significance is possible.

Relations between the two largest states of the world, China and India, are distinguished by a complex and fluid combination of elements of cooperation and rivalry; such complexity is a reflection of the historical features of their geopolitical interaction, as well as the specifics of the position of these super-large states in the world economy and international relations. It can be argued that the prejudices inherited from past historical eras still affect the sociopsychological background of bilateral relations and retain elements of mutual suspicion and distrust in them.

Nevertheless, relations between China and India are steadily developing, and their driving force is the political will and energy to overcome the past, demonstrated by the leaders of the two countries - Chairman Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Both politicians proceed from the notion that their countries are great continental powers and that a peculiar "change of milestones" is taking place in world politics: the "mistresses of the seas" (first England, then the USA) are gradually giving way to the geopolitical initiative to the "continental giants", including China and India. The second important aspect of agreement concerns a common understanding of the role of the economy and foreign economic relations as the most important elements of modern geopolitics. According to the Indian press, in future it is planned to increase the volume of trade between the two countries to 225 billion dollars. Even if this figure looks like an exaggeration, the common goal of the leaders of the two countries is very clear: to

maximize the modernization of industry (including its scientific and technical cluster) and to form influential forces in India and China interested in the progressive development of bilateral relations. However, there are a number of problems in Sino-Indian relations, the prospects for solving which are not entirely clear. Some Chinese international experts believe that the unresolved territorial problem is beneficial for the PRC, because, as Beijing believes, time is working for China.

Approximately since 2008, the problem of increasing rivalry and intensified competition between the giant countries at the regional and, partially, global levels have really come to the forefront in Sino-Indian relations. The differences in approaches to security issues in South Asia and in the Indian Ocean are deepening, which results in a "lack of strategic trust."

A certain concern of Chinese experts is the growing activity of India in the countries of Indochina, which China considers as its historical sphere of influence. In response to the "challenge" of India, some experts suggest further strengthening ties with Pakistan and more intensive development of contacts with countries such as Bangladesh and Nepal, with which India has developed difficult relations.

Chinese experts are alarmed by the intensification of ties with the United States in the military against the backdrop of a general improvement in Indian-American relations. In Beijing, they believe that the USA's decision to "unfreeze" the US-India nuclear agreement pursues the strategic goal of strengthening the "Indian flank" of American opposition to strengthening China's geopolitical position in the Asia-Pacific region.

In successfully developing Sino-Indian trade and economic relations, there are problems of the Indian deficit in trade with China and the structure of foreign economic relations (exports from India to China are mainly commodities, while imports from China are mainly finished products).

Competition for energy resources is becoming an increasingly complex problem in Sino-Indian relations. Experiencing an acute need for oil imports, China and India have repeatedly faced competition for access to hydrocarbons in Central Asia (Kazakhstan), Latin America, Angola and Nigeria, as well as Myanmar. Chinese experts call the situation "competitive rivalry." So far, China has benefited, offering a higher price and providing "in package" economic assistance and investment in the infrastructure of recipient countries.

Obviously, in the long-term (and, possibly, in the medium-term) perspective, primarily at the regional level, China can consider India as its strategic rival. However, at present, Beijing is interested in maintaining normal and stable relations with Delhi, based on the complex tasks associated with the country's internal development and its "near" and "distant" foreign policy priorities.

Personnel changes in Delhi were important in giving pragmatic and mutually beneficial directions to Sino-Chinese relations: for example, Shiv Shankar Menon, the former Indian ambassador to China, was appointed to the post of adviser to the prime minister on national security. Sh.Sh. Menon is known as a supporter of a new approach to relations with China, detached from past fears and prejudices. A new approach to the PRC, Indian political analysts say, is based on the understanding of China as a country that has not only impressive economic achievements, but also serious internal problems, the solution of which will be subordinated to the main efforts of the party-state leadership. "An effective economy is the main condition for an effective foreign policy," the "strategic" elites in India and China say in approximately the same way, which makes the relations between the two countries more predictable than is sometimes presented to some segments of public opinion in both states.

For a long time, Russia and India - each country for its own reasons - entertained themselves with the illusion of the comfort of a "unipolar", that is, the monopolar "American world." The elites of both countries were ready to play world politics according to the rules established by Washington. However, the "unexpectedly" global economic crisis showed the precariousness of the political economy of the unipolar world and forced many, including Moscow and Delhi, to take more initiative and courage.

The Russian-Indian summit meetings, obviously, gave not only plentiful food for the mind, but also prompted Delhi and Moscow to, so to speak, change the geopolitical paradigm, to return, however, under new conditions and with new meaningful content, to the time-tested connections which in the recent past did not prevent either India or the Soviet Union from strengthening its strategic positions in the southern part of Central Eurasia. Now the conditions for the new Russian-Indian "Entente" are even more favorable, if only because Russia does not need to quarrel with either America or China, but simply, relying on a clear political will, defend its strategic interests.

In my opinion, this new Russian-Indian understanding and mutual acquisition should be complemented by an active dialogue with China in a trilateral format. Then both the Indian-Chinese understanding and the concept of a multipolar world will gain real life foundations. In international journalism and in "pseudoscientific" circles, India and China are often called the "Elephant" and "Dragon", apparently not forgetting about their traditional socio-cultural images-symbols. Economists, on the other hand, prefer to consider two super-large countries as potential "locomotives" of world development. So, the famous British financial analyst Anatole Kalecki believes that the steady upward development of the world economy (and not only its recovery growth) directly depends on the vitality of the super-large and large countries - China and India, as well as Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, Egypt, South Africa and etc. This tone, it is added from experts, will ultimately be determined by the ability of the ruling circles of the "new influential states" of the world community to effectively expand and increase the capacity of their domestic markets, effectively stimulate the increase in the effective demand of the mass layers of the population, and persistently seek to turn the middle class into the main force social development. Therefore, for example, relations between Beijing and Delhi are put by the Chinese leadership on a par with relations between the PRC and its other most significant strategic partners in the system of modern international relations.

So, an important direction in Sino-Indian relations is the intention of the parties to support the mechanism of multilateral cooperation in Asia with a positive assessment of the participation of the parties in the process of trans-regional, regional and sub-regional cooperation, as well as expand cooperation within the framework of the East Asian Summit, Asia-Europe Forum, SCO, China-Russia-India cooperation mechanism, South Asian Regional Cooperation Association (SAARC).

As for the trends emerging in the statements of Chinese experts and analysts writing about Sino-Indian relations, the following can be noted. First of all, there were significantly fewer criticisms of Indian policy in open publications and in the press than in 2008-2009. Chinese experts emphasize that China and India, thanks to their economic reform policies, have maintained relatively high rates of development and are playing a positive role in restoring the global economy.

Celebrating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India in 2010, Chinese political scientists emphasized that the main content of relations between the two countries for 60 years was good neighborliness, friendship and cooperation, and "unpleasant conflicts were temporary" (Zhou Gang - Former Chinese Ambassador to India, Speech at the 10th Trilateral Conference "Russia-China-India. Moscow, September 2010).

Chinese and Indian experts began to jointly and more actively advocate for cooperation in the field of the environment, combating climate change and improving the efficiency of energy use. At the end of December 2010, the Xinhua News Agency published a report on the research report "Comparative analysis of the state of China and India in the field of environment and development," developed by experts from the China Committee on International Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and Development and the Indian Committee on Sustainable Development. The report summarized the history and current state of the environment and development in China and India, listed the common features and differences between the two countries, and identified the challenges they faced. Experts, proposing a further deepening of cooperation, advocated the creation of a forum (platform) aimed at increasing contacts between official departments and exchanging experience between the two countries.

In light of this trend, Chinese experts (mentioned by Zhou Gang) urge both the PRC and India to "remain vigilant in the event of attempts by any third party to bring discord into bilateral relations."

Based on the tasks of domestic political development and its foreign policy priorities, China will seek to maintain good-neighborly, stable relations with India in the near and possibly in the medium term. At the same time, the significant problems in Sino-Indian relations remain a territorial dispute, increasing competition in the political and economic spheres, ideological factors that underlie the development models of India and China, and ways to solve or mitigate them are still uncertain. Beijing perfectly understands all the complexities of the relationship within the China-India-USA triangle. And so, China, through the mouth of President Hu Jintao, in November 2006, proposed India closer bilateral cooperation in nuclear energy. Political scientists note the pragmatic approach of both Delhi and Beijing to the development of bilateral relations, a powerful help of which is the avalanche-like growth in the volume of foreign economic relations between the two countries. The historical dynamics of Sino-Indian relations

clearly indicates to Russia the paradigm of its future activities. Firstly, a forced economic recovery will allow the country to actively use the "soft power" factors in foreign policy and thereby once and for all get rid of the "inferiority complex" in relation to the West. Secondly, industrial-based economic growth will make interaction within the "triangle" natural, and it will make it easier for the country to achieve the strategic objective of accelerated development of Siberia and the Far East. Thirdly, the horizontal interaction of the three countries can serve as a prototype of the new structure of the world system on the basis of "unity in diversity." In this, and only in this capacity, a revival of the "triangle" and its strategic significance is possible.

America's political class unexpectedly felt that India had become a fast-growing mega-economy, that the country had established itself as a reliable participant in the nuclear non-proliferation regime (although it was not among the signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty), that India was a partner in the nuclear energy sector that was welcome for the United States, and that, finally, this country has a wide vector of opportunities to maintain and strengthen its own national security. A powerful factor in expanding foreign economic relations with India was the American "corporate community", which did not want to delve into the subtleties of the argument used by "orthodoxies from nuclear non-proliferation." An important linking mechanism for bilateral relations is the successful Indian community in the United States, which currently numbers more than 3 million people. The current US-Indian relations have, in comparison with the past, two new "fundamental" elements.

First: the United States no longer views its relations with India as part of the US-India-Pakistan triangle. In other words, the Americans prefer bilateral relations with both countries, believing, obviously, that distancing themselves from the "Kashmir problem", for example, will help them feel free in the South Asian "theater" of diplomatic actions (however, Pakistan, including for domestic political reasons, does not I'm ready to agree that Kashmir is a problem of bilateral relations with India.)

Second: now both India and Pakistan are seen by Washington as "valuable strategic actors" in Eurasia: India - as a state that affects the overall balance of power in Asia; Pakistan - as a territory at the intersection of routes connecting South and Central Asia, and the Middle East. A promising goal of the American strategy is to reorient oil and gas flows from Central Asia to the south, that is, away from China. However, the question remains unresolved: are India and Pakistan (especially the latter) ready for such a geopolitical sacrifice?

The US "new" approach to India is based on three long-term foundations. First, the de facto USA recognizes India as the "responsible owner of nuclear weapons," and the nuclear weapons at its disposal that do not threaten the security of the United States are an authoritative specialist in this field, a former director of the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis in Delhi, K. Santanam considers it sufficient for India's nuclear arsenals to have 120-165 such "products." Secondly, strengthening Indian defense is in the long-term interests of the United States for the following reasons: 1) balancing China, which does not imply a mandatory military-political alliance between the United States and India; 2) the strengthening of the security regime in the countries of Southeast Asia, including the protection of sea routes for energy delivery to the Far East (the effectiveness of this function is tested on joint US-Indian military maneuvers). Thirdly, the strengthening of Indian-Pakistani relations meets the long-term geopolitical interests of the United States in Asia, primarily the creation of a system of relations, treaties, alliances, if not under the auspices of America, then under its "sensitive and wise leadership."

However, the United States has already encountered certain difficulties in this area of its Asian policy. Thus, Pakistan in every way restricts access for India (through its territory) to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Currently, India is forced to transport its goods bypass route, that is, through Iran. In addition, the lack of real progress on the "Kashmir problem" is increasing pressure on civilian authorities in Islamabad by Pakistani Islamists, who believe that their country does not receive tangible reciprocal concessions from India as a possible compensation for Pakistan's revision of Kashmir's policy.

The difficulties of establishing a new model of US-Indian relations in South Asia can be represented as follows: the significantly advanced US-Indian strategic partnership relations limit the US's ability to influence Islamabad. Most likely, Pakistani authorities doubt Washington's ability to be an impartial mediator in regional "disputes" with India, America's new strategically.

Now, however, a sober view on the development of Indian-American relations, in particular in nuclear energy, begins to prevail in India itself. In India, there is a stable point of view according to which

the "strategic elites" of this country consider nuclear weapons not only (and maybe not so much) as a means of deterring hypothetical aggression, but also as a symbol of "modernity" and technological excellence, as a factor in global self-assertion, as the "sixth pole of power" (the remaining centers are the USA, Western Europe, Japan, Russia, China) in a polycentric world order. Finally, India's "nuclear choice" is capable, as both left and right, and centrists believe, of modifying the "non-proliferation agenda" that the USA is aggressively imposing. It is also worth recalling: India's current policy in the field of nuclear weapons development has been supported by more than 95% of the population for a rather long time. It is from this perspective that the political class of India considers its relations with America.

Indian strategic elites were intellectually ready for the United States to actually recognize its status as "first among equals" in the world at the beginning of the third millennium. The Indian political class also understands: the prospects for the revitalization of the American economy depend to a certain extent on the deepening of bilateral relations between the USA and India, on the creation of a model of interaction between the two countries, different from the model of Sino-US relations that is subject to constant conflict.

## 2. CONCLUSION

In a world that has once again returned to the paradigm of "balance of power," says the famous political scientist C. Subramaniam, India is the most natural ally of the United States. Subramaniam sees the main rationale for this thesis in a peculiar rhetorical question that excites the imagination of some Indian strategic elites: which international system is preferable for India - the one where the United States holds the leading position (primarily in the field of high technology) or a model with a clearly pronounced predominance of China? It is this approach, according to some authors, that will help persuade the United States to cooperate with India on the terms of the latter. At the same time, even representatives of the "pro-Western" part of the Indian political class emphasize: Indian-American relations should not be built on an "allied", but on a "partnership" basis.

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